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ABSTRACT

Research reveals that parental involvement in their children's education improves attendance, increases academic achievement, improves student behavior and study habits, and generates positive attitudes toward schools. The demands of work and family can act as barriers to involvement. Some parents are discouraged by a fear of incompetence and educators' desires to exclude them. Businesses report that parental involvement in schools reduces absenteeism, turnover, and tardiness and increases productivity. House Joint Resolution 230, approved by the 1992 Virginia General Assembly, requested the Department of Education to study the parental leave time to promote parental involvement and service to public schools. Request for Proposal number 92-30 was initiated. This report contains the methods, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study team. The Department of Education examined the following issues involved in parental leave: its impact on education; models of involvement; business, school, and parental perceptions of motivations for involvement; and school-business partnerships. Business support is associated with higher rates of the use of leave. Many parents and educators agreed with businesses that leave time should not be mandated. To expand parental involvement in schools, Virginia's Department of Education recommended that: (1) educators should accommodate parents' work schedules and establish volunteer programs; (2) parent volunteers should be used to extend school resources; (3) businesses should demonstrate their commitment to education by recognizing the need for employees to have time to participate in local school affairs; (4) leave time should not be mandated; (5) the Virginia Business-Education Partnership program should continue its efforts; and (6) the Office of Volunteerism should provide information on employee leave policies that promote parental involvement. (Contains 28 references.) (TEJ)

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ED 404 713

REPORT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Study of Employee Leave for School Service

TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA

HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 55

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
1993

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PREFACE

House Joint Resolution 230, approved by the 1992 Virginia General Assembly, requested the Department of Education to study the parental leave time to promote parental involvement and service in the public schools. To this end, the Department of Education's Management Council initiated Request For Proposal number 92-30. This report contains the methods, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study team.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1991, Governor L. Douglas Wilder initiated a state policy permitting state employees to receive paid leave to enable them to become more active in their local schools. This education reform initiative recognizes the importance of parental involvement in the education of children, focusing on improving student performance through increased parental commitment.

The 1992 General Assembly approved House Joint Resolution 230, sponsored by The Honorable Linda T. Puller, Member, Virginia House of Delegates (Fairfax). This resolution requested the Virginia Department of Education "to study parental leave time to promote parental involvement and for service in the public schools."

Research reveals that parent involvement in their children's education relates to improved student attendance, increased student academic achievement, and improved student behaviors and homework habits. Further, students and parents tend to develop more positive attitudes toward school. Finally, communication between the parent and the child and between parent and the school improves.

Although there are many successful programs in schools, most parents express a desire to increase their involvement in their child's education. Many parents cite the demands of work and family responsibilities as sources of interference with their ability to become involved in their child's schooling. Other parents do not view themselves as competent participants in education. Some parents indicate that educators do little to involve them in schooling, and frequently do not respond to the scheduling issues affecting working parents.

Corporate response to family issues, including employee involvement in schools, has demonstrated a positive impact on the businesses. Many employers report that reduced absenteeism, turnover and tardiness and increased morale, loyalty, and productivity are results of introducing family-sensitive personnel policies.

Several blue ribbon education reform groups have directed attention to issues associated with parental involvement in education. In Virginia, the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000: A Partnership for Excellence (1991) and the Virginia Chamber of Commerce Education Reform Initiative (1991) both speak to the value of employer support for programs that encourage parents to become involved in their children's schooling.

Governor Wilder's policy encouraging state employee activity

in the schools provides eight hours of paid leave time each year. Virginia's policy is unique, as most employers do not have a specific policy supporting school involvement.

The Department of Education study team examined the issues associated with parental leave for school service presented in the study resolution. These include: the impact of parental involvement and volunteerism in education; models of parental involvement; factors influencing employee leave for school service, from the perspectives of business, school, and parent; models of employee leave for school activities; and school business-partnerships. The team reviewed recent research on parental involvement and volunteerism, conducted focus groups with parents, educators and business leaders, examined volunteerism data and surveyed members of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce regarding employee leave for school service.

Focus group analysis revealed that educators, parents, and business leaders in Virginia value parental involvement in education. Parents and other volunteers extend school resources. The focus group participants offered numerous examples of innovative methods for involving parents and community volunteers in use by many schools throughout the Commonwealth. Data analysis reveals there is great diversity in the nature and extent of school volunteer programs in Virginia. Effective parent and volunteer programs require organization and allocation of staff resources.

Educators, parents, and business leaders in focus groups identified many barriers to effective parental involvement in education. These include parent work schedules, staff time and resources, and educator and parent attitudes.

Analysis of the research and the survey of members of the State Chamber of Commerce revealed that businesses use a variety of written and unwritten policies to provide parents with time to participate in school activities. Focus group analysis confirmed the trend noted in the research that employee involvement is highest when there is a commitment from the business leadership.

Focus group analysis and the survey of employers revealed that Virginia employers believe that the government should not mandate leave for school service. Many parent and educator participants in focus group echoed this sentiment.

A number of businesses demonstrate their commitment to education through active participation in school-business partnerships. The Virginia Business Education Partnership Program, created by the Virginia Department of Education, the Virginia Office of Volunteerism and the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, is providing leadership in the development of such partnerships.

The Department of Education report, as requested by House Joint Resolution 230, also presents some effective practices of employee leave, parental involvement, and school-business partnerships. This report provides information for parents, schools, or businesses that are beginning or revising initiatives in these areas.

The Department of Education concludes that the Commonwealth should continue its efforts to expand parent and volunteer involvement in public schools, through the actions of educators, employers and parents. Provision of leave to employees to provide services to school and participate in school activities facilitates such parental and volunteer involvement. Specifically, the Department following recommendations:

- Educators should recognize the importance of parental involvement in public education through parent-responsive school policies. These may include accommodating parent work schedules in establishing conferences and meetings, establishing formal parent education/volunteer programs, and heightening educator awareness of the needs of non-traditional and non middle class families.

- Virginia educators should capitalize on the resources available to schools through volunteers. Schools should assign personnel with the responsibilities associated with administration of a volunteer program.

- Employers are encouraged to demonstrate their commitment to public education by recognizing the need for employees to have time to participate in local school affairs. This commitment should be articulated by business leadership.

- The Commonwealth should not mandate employee leave for school service for private employers.

- The Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program should continue its efforts to develop exemplary school-business partnerships in the Commonwealth.

- The Office of Volunteerism should expand its resource library to include information on employee leave policies that promote parental involvement in schools.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

Overview

On December 10, 1991, Governor L. Douglas Wilder endorsed a policy for state employees designed to encourage active involvement in local schools. The Governor recognized the importance of increased parental involvement in the classroom to improve students' academic performance. His policy permits each state employee to take eight hours of paid leave per year to participate in school activities and school-approved volunteer projects. The policy encourages state employees who do not have children to also support the schools as well. The Governor stated, "in the long run, everybody -- workers, students, teachers, parents, employers, and the Commonwealth as a whole -- benefits from this cycle of cooperation and commitment to student and worker excellence."

Improved parental involvement in education has been a cornerstone of many recent education reform efforts, including President Bush's America 2000 initiative. Research and personal experience highlight the benefits that accrue to children and to the education system through parental involvement. Educators and members of the public both support increased interaction between families and educators. Parent participation relates positively to improved student attendance, behavior and academic achievement, and more positive expectations and attitudes toward school (First and Gray, 1991).

Forty years ago, work and family seldom collided. The traditional family included a father who worked and a mother who stayed at home. This scenario describes only one in ten families today. The other nine families include two-working parents and single parents. Only nine percent of women with children worked outside the home in 1940, in contrast to 63 percent who worked outside the home in 1987. It is predicted that by 1995 more than 80 percent of American women between the ages of 20 and 44 will be in the labor force (Luciano, 1992).

One of the many impacts of the change in work-family demographics is reflected in the limited amount of time frequently available to parents to participate in their children's education. Employment of two parents and single parents restricts the families' abilities to be involved in schools. Over the past decade, many business-education reform recommendations have emphasized the need to be sensitive to employees' desires to participate in their children's educational program.

In 1985, the Research and Policy Committee of the Committee

for Economic Development recommended, "that businesses make a special effort to support the involvement of all their employees who are parents in their children's schooling and to provide information about schools and education issues to all interested employees." The Committee further recommended, "that businesses develop flexible policies which allow and encourage both parents and interested nonparents, especially those who are hourly employees, to participate actively in their community's schools."

The Virginia Plan for Strengthening the Commonwealth's 21st Century Workforce (Workforce 2000) includes a recommendation that "the Commonwealth of Virginia should create a system for the development and support of partnerships between business and education" (1991). One result of this plan was the creation of the Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program designed to foster business-education partnerships.

The Virginia Chamber of Commerce Education Reform Initiative (1991) spoke to the importance of parental involvement in education. The Chamber's report included the recommendation that "businesses, through their personnel policies, consider creating more flexible opportunities for working parents to participate in school events and conferences held during working hours." The report also placed responsibility on schools to encourage parental involvement. "Schools," the report said, (should) "consider more flexible opportunities for working parents to participate in school events/conferences."

Employers have frequently found that responsiveness to family issues can yield returns in: reduced absenteeism, turnover, and tardiness; increased morale, loyalty and productivity (Spruel, 1986). An increasing number of companies recognize and address the need of employees to balance their work and family responsibilities. Employers report that "family-friendly" policies lead to improved recruitment and retention, increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, and enhanced goodwill on the part of employers. (Matthes, 1992). Some of the proposed options for parental involvement are flexible hours for teacher meetings, time off to serve on school boards and committees, and opportunities at the worksite for parent training.

Origin of Study

The Honorable Linda T. Puller, Member, Virginia House of Delegates (Fairfax) introduced House Joint Resolution 230 in the 1992 Virginia General Assembly, calling for the Department of Education to study parental leave time to promote parental involvement and service in public schools. This resolution was responsive to the need for more involvement of parents in their children's education. The resolution requests the Department to study parental involvement, employer leave policies, and school-

business partnerships. The resolution further asks the Department to provide recommendations on ways to encourage businesses in the Commonwealth to grant leave time for parents and to recommend ways to promote both parental involvement and school-business partnership programs.

Purpose and Scope

The goal of this study was to investigate factors that drive or restrain parental involvement and service in the public schools, with specific focus on employee leave policies. The study has the following major objectives:

- to identify successful models of employee leave for school involvement;
- to identify the number, types and location of businesses that offer leave policies for school service, and the types of leave policies offered;
- to determine the extent of parent involvement and volunteerism in schools;
- to identify opportunities for encouragement of parental involvement offered by Virginia school divisions;
- to identify numbers and types of school-business partnerships.

The study also identified vehicles to encourage businesses in the Commonwealth to grant employees leave for participation in school activities and to promote both parental involvement and school-business partnerships.

Study Approach

A team comprised of personnel from the Department of Education conducted the study. The team received assistance from the Department of Economic Development, the State Chamber of Commerce, the Office of Volunteerism, the Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program, the Virginia Congress of Parent-Teacher Associations and local Chambers of Commerce. In addition, the team received input from parents, school officials, and business leaders throughout the Commonwealth.

Methods employed in conducting this study included:

- an analysis of research on the impact of parental involvement in schools on children, parents, communities, and employers;
- an analysis of research regarding successful school-

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business partnership and volunteer programs;

- an analysis of the qualitative information provided by statewide focus groups of parents, school officials and business leaders, addressing attitudes and concerns regarding parental involvement in public schools and employer leave for school service (Appendix B provides Focus Group methodology);

- an analysis of a survey of Virginia State Chamber of Commerce member businesses regarding employee leave for school service;

- interviews with staff from selected school divisions with active parent volunteer programs;

- interviews with officials from selected businesses in Virginia and throughout the nation regarding involvement in schools and employee leave policies related to school service;

- a review of the Code of Virginia, Board of Education Regulations and federal requirements regarding parental involvement in schools;

- analysis of information gathered via the Department of Education's 1992 survey of school-business partnerships;

- analysis of information gathered via the United States Department of Education's 1987-88 study of public and private school volunteerism; and,

- a review of the current initiatives of the Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program.

Overview of this Report

This report is organized into six chapters. Following this background information on the study, Chapters II through V examine parental involvement, volunteerism, employee leave, and school business partnerships. The final chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations. Appendices provide illustrations of innovative and effective practices for parental involvement received from parents, schools, and businesses.

This organization reflects the major themes which emerged from analysis of the research and study results. It further reflects the interests of potential audiences for this report, as certain readers will have a greater interest in one topic over another.

Chapter II.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Overview

Active involvement of parents in the educational process has a positive impact on student performance and behavior. The study of parental leave time to promote parental involvement in public schools begins with review and analysis of the issues associated with parental involvement. This chapter presents background information regarding the value of parental involvement, analysis of parental involvement standards and initiatives in Virginia, and the status of parental involvement in Virginia, as presented by the Virginia Parent-Teacher Association Survey and focus group participants.

Background

Parents can have a significant effect on children's learning experience in school. Research shows that parental involvement relates positively to gains in academic achievement; improved student behavior; lower student absenteeism; more positive attitudes toward school; improved homework habits; and more positive parent-child communications (Rich, 1985; Seefelt, 1985). Active parent commitment to education is an indispensable component of any educational program. Schools cannot compensate for the role of the parent. Although parents and educators agree on the need for increased parental involvement, there is less agreement regarding its nature.

Most parents express a desire to become more involved in their children's schools. Although many parents report successful involvement in their children's education, three-quarters express a desire to do more than participate in fund-raising activities and student performances (Brandt, 1989).

Unfortunately, there are numerous barriers to parental involvement in schools. Many educators believe that parents do not value education nor care about their children. Other educators view parents as pushy, aggressive, difficult to contact, resistant to recommendations, or intellectually or physically neglectful of their children (Chavkin, 1989). Some teachers report a lack of trust of parents, perhaps due to a history of poor experience with parental involvement programs. Unfortunately, when a school staff treats parents as problems, the parental response may generate alienation and hostility toward the school. This response will further reinforce staff perceptions of parent apathy.

Some teachers maintain a bias against families that differ from middle-class norms. Studies indicate that teachers often

believe that poor families do not have the interest or competence to be participants in their children's education. Educators may view these parents as apathetic or hostile to education. In general, many low-income parents have minimal contact with schools. The communications with schools are often negative, in response to academic or behavioral problems. Further, many low-income parents do not see themselves as competent participants in their children's education. Despite these factors, Chavkin (1989) reports that 95 percent of low-income parents express a strong commitment to their children's education.

Some educators fail to consider parents as legitimate partners in education. These educators view parents' roles in a traditional light - outside the school's operation and curriculum. Schools frequently fail to involve parents in the conception, planning or design of programs for their children. As a result, school programs may not address the realities of the home environment. School programs direct parents and families rather than collaborate with them. The result may be minimal ownership of and commitment to programs on the part of parents.

Parents and educators have questioned the responsiveness of schools to single-parent households and those in which both parents work (First and Grey, 1991). These family structures complicate the logistics of parental involvement. The schools' practice of scheduling of conferences, meetings and volunteer activities often does not accommodate parents' work responsibilities. Short notice of such events may further restrict parental involvement due to the time required to obtain leave or to find babysitters. Many school administrators have not modified school programs sufficiently to account for the changes in family structure in the United States. These attitudes contribute to the disenfranchisement of certain parents (First and Gray, 1991).

The education reform movement's focus on parental involvement has resulted in numerous proposals for increasing such involvement. For example, the National Parent Teacher Association recommends that schools take these action items to promote parental involvement in education:

- renew commitment to parent involvement through policies;
- give parent involvement a high profile;
- strengthen efforts to involve minority families; and,
- keep lines of communication open.

The Association offers tips for promoting parent involvement in education. These tips reflect the changing nature of families in the 1990s: hold parent-teacher conferences at convenient times, offer child-care during school functions, vary the nights of PTA meetings, reorganize the school day and year-

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around family schedules and seek parents at home and at work (Education Daily, June 3, 1992).

Parental Involvement Standards

Several federal and state education initiatives include provisions for parental involvement to ensure that local educators would involve parents in the planning and implementation of programs. These initiatives focus both on the entire school-family-community and on specific student populations.

The Virginia **Standards of Quality** establish that each local school board ensure that the development of the policy manual give consideration to the views of parents and other concerned citizens. The Standards specifically call for a policy promoting school-community communications and community involvement and for guidelines to encourage parents to provide instructional assistance to their children in the home (Code of Virginia, §22.1-253.13.7 Standard 7.D).

The state Board of Education promulgates the **Standards of Accreditation Public Schools in Virginia** (1992) which further address interaction between parents and community. The regulations require each school to involve parents in providing a quality educational program (i.e., in developing and disseminating the biennial school plan, on advisory committees, in curriculum studies, and in evaluating educational programs). Further, the accreditation standards require schools to encourage and support the establishment of a parent-teacher association or organization and to work cooperatively with the organization (Part II. §2.1 School and Community Relations).

Federal and state standards for students with disabilities require involvement of parents. The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** (IDEA) requires that each state establish a State Special Education Advisory Committee (SSEAC) to advise the state in the provision of services to eligible students with disabilities [20 U.S.C. §1413(a)(12)].

Virginia's SSEAC includes individuals with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, teachers, and state and local educational officials. The committee advises the Board of Education and Department of Education regarding unmet state needs in the education of children with disabilities. The current chair is a parent.

The **Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Handicapped Children and Youth in Virginia** (Rev., 1991) require local school divisions to establish local advisory committees that include parents as full members (§3.7.C.).

In addition, the regulations guarantee parents certain due process rights to notification and consent, and allow for parental participation in the development of the Individualized Education Program [§3.5(A)(1)(i)]. The Department of Education publishes a handbook, A Parent's Guide to Special Education, to encourage more active and constructive parent involvement.

Since 1988, the Virginia Department of Education has employed a parent-educator team to assist local school divisions with funding and training to establish local Parent Resource Centers. These Centers provide information and training for parents of children with disabilities. Some Centers include training, assistance and referral information for all families. Each local Center employs a parent to work in collaboration with educators.

Chapters 1 and 2 of Title 1 of the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act** (P.L. 100-297) require establishment of parent advisory groups (20 U.S.C. §200.34; §298.4). The Chapter 1 parent advisory council provides parents the opportunity for formal and informal consultation in planning, designing, implementing and evaluating the program. The Virginia Department of Education publishes A Handbook for ESEA Chapter 1 Parents to further enhance the involvement of parents in Chapter 1 programs. The Chapter 2 parent advisory committee advises schools on the allocation of funds and the planning, development, support, implementation, and evaluation of programs.

The **National School Lunch Act** and the **Child Nutrition Act** require school food authorities to promote activities that involve students and parents. Activities include planning menus, enhancing the eating environment, program promotion, and other student-community support activities (7 CFD §210.12).

The federal **Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act of 1990** (P.L. 89-524) also includes parental involvement. The Act requires a training agreement that identifies the roles and responsibilities of students, parents, employers, administrators, and teachers [§118.(a)].

Virginia Experience

Virginia Parent Teacher Association Survey

In 1989, the Virginia Parent Teacher Association completed a survey of parents in Virginia public schools, to gauge the degree of parental involvement in schools (Delaney, 1991). Nearly 37,000 persons responded to the survey, entitled, "How Welcome Are Parents in Our School?" Responses revealed a positive picture (e.g., school staff were friendly and courteous towards parents, and, in general, encouraged parents to visit their children's classrooms).

However, Delaney reports that schools are not responding to the changing family structure. Many parents said they had difficulty getting to school during their work time. Parents commented that school officials did not understand the need to advise parents of upcoming events in time for them to arrange their work and home schedules. Also cited were transportation barriers in rural areas and in housing projects. Some parents reported feeling "devalued" since they had to work and could not be at the school. Others commented that administrators often convey the message that taking time for parents is "too much trouble." Delaney states "the test for the PTA and Virginia is to find new ways to involve parents ... If all parents do not feel welcome in Virginia's schools, it is incumbent on all of us to work to address that need."

Focus Groups

The Department of Education conducted twelve Focus Groups with parents, educators and business leaders to identify the issues associated with parental involvement in schools and employee leave for school service. Appendix B presents the Focus Group methodology.

Although the sessions were conducted separately, analysis of the comments revealed great similarity in the opinions held by parents, educators and business leaders. The following presents the major themes identified by each constituent group, in response to specific focus group questions. Parents and educators were asked more parental involvement questions than were business leaders.

1. What would be some of the benefits of increased parental involvement?

Parents

- Greater understanding of the school environment, improved student performance, fewer discipline problems, greater support for schools, more time for teachers to help students in need.

Educators

- Increases in funding, expansion of programs, greater parental understanding of the school, improved student academic performance and self-esteem, and reduction in discipline problems.

- Parental commitment to education and trust of the educational system.

- Support from parents in dispelling false rumors about the

schools that may arise within the community; diffusion and prevention of problems that typically arise when schools deal with politically sensitive issues (e.g., attendance zones and facilities).

- Accountability for the skills and abilities students develop.

2. In what ways have parents been involved in the schools in your locality?

Parents

- PTA membership, parent-teacher conferences, participating in career days, tutoring individual students, reading stories, serving as room mothers and substitute teachers, grading papers, chaperoning trips, supporting athletic and band boosters, and participating in Head Start and special education programs and activities.

Educators

- Participating in PTA activities, conferences, field trips, athletic and music events; serving as tutors and substitute teachers.

- Serving on advisory committees, establishing and managing parent resource centers, participating in determining school policy, receiving training, and assisting with development and review of educational programs.

3. What are the driving forces that encourage parental involvement in the schools in your locality?

Parents

- Experiencing success with involvement.

- Holding school board meetings, parent-teacher conferences and other meetings in the evening.

- Having open door policy at the school.

Educators

- Effective volunteer programs run by trained parents.

- Parents having successful involvement in schools.

- Willingness among educators and school boards to be open and receptive and to listen to parents.

4. What are the restraining forces that discourage parental involvement in the schools?

Parents

- Parental feelings of inadequacy: they do not know enough, they fear confronting and dealing with educated persons, challenging the status quo.
- Principals and teachers who prejudge parents' ability to contribute to the success of their children.
- Negative attitudes of educators (e.g., resistant to parental involvement, view parents as a threat) resulting in a feeling of alienation from the schools.
- Feeling that parents who are willing to agree with the school administration are welcome, while others are not.
- Lack of communication between the home and the school.

Educators

- Reluctance among many parents to become involved:
  - parents who had unsuccessful or abbreviated school experiences;
  - parents who hold more than one job, frequently low-paying;
  - single parents who are raising their children alone;
  - parents who may not feel capable of helping their children succeed in school;
  - parents who find schools intimidating;
  - parents who see the school as a place to come only when there is a problem;
  - parents who feel inferior to teachers.
- Lack of transportation.
- Parents who spend long hours working, traveling, or commuting and have little time left for participating in their children's education.
- Parents who work as hourly employees who cannot participate in their children's education without losing pay.
- Educators who are unresponsive and fail to encourage involvement (especially with parents of other cultures), educators who prejudge parents, educators who do not make parents feel welcome at school.
- Administrators who want to maintain some degree of control over visitors in the school and are resistant to having

parents in the classroom.

- Educators who are concerned that parents and volunteers are not dependable or become involved to promote their own causes or agendas.

- Rigid class structure of secondary schools which inhibits parental involvement (with the exception of activities like athletic and band boosters).

- Poorly managed volunteer programs in the schools.

Business Leaders

- Limited responsiveness on the part of schools to the demands of the work schedule.

- Schools need to improve the use of their current pool of volunteer talent.

5. If increasing numbers of employers begin granting paid leave to employees to volunteer in the schools, in what kinds of meaningful activities would you like to participate?

Parents

- Tutoring, serving on advisory and policy committees, assisting and observing in the classroom.

Educators

- Tutoring, mentorships, guest speakers, substitute teaching.

6. What can schools do to encourage more parental involvement in the schools?

Parents

- Increase flexibility in scheduling programs and activities, schedule school board meetings, parent teacher conferences, and committee meetings at night to permit participation from a wider segment of the parent population.

- Maintain open communication; create greater openness to parents on the part of school boards and administrators; reduce defensive behavior among educators.

- Make parents feel welcome: reach out to parents and make coming to school more pleasurable.

Educators

- Demonstrated leadership by the principal and superintendent.

- Maintain open communication: become more open and receptive to parent involvement.
- Effectively use the current pool of volunteers available to the schools.
- Become more flexible in scheduling programs and activities at night (e.g., school board meetings, parent-teacher conferences, committee meetings).
- Designate a parent visitation day each year.
- Provide training for teachers and administrators (e.g., developing and operating parent involvement programs, effective communication and interaction techniques with persons from different cultures).
- Provide training for parents focusing on serving as volunteers and volunteer coordinators.
- Provide community-based parent workshops and tutoring services for students (e.g., churches).
- Require the parents of suspended students to come to school and follow their children for the term of the suspension.
- Release school division employees to volunteer in schools.

The parents and educators in the focus groups presented similar themes. Participant comments underscore the benefits of parental involvement: improved student performance, reduction of discipline problems and greater support for schools. Parental involvement ranges from parent-teacher conferences to substitute teaching and service on advisory committees. Driving forces encouraging parental involvement are open communication between parents and educators, successful interactions between home and school, flexible meeting times and organized parental volunteer programs. Appendix E captures many of the specific ideas for achieving effective parental involvement generated during focus groups.

While supporting parental involvement, participants perceive numerous barriers to parental involvement. Of greatest concern are ineffective communication practices and parental and educator attitudes. In addition, parents and educators identify issues related to employment (e.g., time requirement for work, loss of pay). Groups indicate that the development of open communication and increasing the flexibility in scheduling school programs are critical to increasing parental involvement.

Summary and Conclusions

According to the literature cited in this chapter, there are several benefits that accrue to students, parents and educators through parental involvement in the education of their children. Educators, parents and business leaders in Virginia value parental involvement in education.

State and federal education policy-makers develop regulations and legislation designed to involve parents in planning and providing educational services to children. Many schools have active parent programs that meet these requirements, and some go far beyond the mandates. School personnel are implementing innovative methods of involving parents and communities. The most effective parent programs require allocation of resources, including both staff time and fiscal resources.

Parents and educators identify numerous barriers to obtaining parental involvement. These barriers include parent work schedules, school staff time and resources, and the attitudes of educators and parents. Focus Group participants offer many suggestions for reducing barriers, ranging from increased flexibility in scheduling events to training for educators.

CHAPTER III.

VOLUNTEERISM

Overview

Parents serve as valuable resources to educators when involved in local programs. School personnel can expand upon the personnel resources available to them through utilization of parent and non-parent volunteers. Volunteers offer many hours of service to school divisions, oftentimes taking leave from work to provide assistance to the schools.

This Chapter presents an overview of school volunteer programs, including discussion of public attitude toward volunteerism and data regarding volunteerism in schools.

Background

Schools in the United States have long relied on volunteers to augment personnel and fiscal resources. Traditionally, such efforts have relied on the at-home mother, who provided assistance in the classroom. With the decrease in the number of traditional two-parent families, schools must adjust their approach to the use of volunteers. School districts are focusing on two types of volunteer resources: individual volunteers and partners. Volunteers are typically individuals who work with schools on a one-to-one basis. Partnerships involve groups: organizations, businesses, or public and private agencies. This chapter will focus on volunteers. Chapter V will further address school-business partnerships as a school resource.

Volunteers provide teachers and administrators with greater opportunities to dedicate their energies to instructional and student-oriented activities. It is estimated that more than four million persons provide volunteer services in schools each year. Typical volunteer activities include: one-to-one tutoring; service on advisory committees; provision of administrative advice; one-to-one mentoring for students; provision of assistance in specific content areas (e.g., math, science, finance, health, drug education); fund raising; assistance with special school programs and field trips

Effective utilization of volunteers requires the development of a comprehensive, division-wide program for coordination and training. The key to an effective program is the clearly defined roles of the volunteer and the school staff. Figure 1 displays some of the recommendations of the American Association of School Administrators for effective use of volunteers.

FIGURE 1: DO'S AND DON'TS FOR USING VOLUNTEERS*	
DO	**DON'T**
♦ Invite volunteers	♦ Regard volunteers as a tolerable addition to the school program
♦ Define staff and volunteer roles and tasks	♦ Use volunteers as a substitute for paid faculty or staff
♦ Obtain assistance from staff in defining volunteer tasks	♦ Assign many persons to coordinate volunteer activities
♦ Complement staff responsibilities with volunteer activities	♦ Use volunteers without providing orientation, or delineating roles and responsibilities
♦ Assign staff to be responsible for administration of a volunteer program	♦ Overuse, underuse or misuse volunteers
♦ Orient volunteers to school functions, goals and methods	♦ Let volunteers act in isolation from the other volunteers or staff
♦ Identify volunteers' time commitment	♦ Forget to show appreciation
♦ Express appreciation for work provided	
♦ Assign volunteers on the basis of their skills, knowledge, interests	

* Adapted from Decker, L.E. & Decker, V.A. (1988) Home/school/community involvement. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators

Public Opinion

The **24th Annual Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools** (1992) queried respondents regarding their willingness to help in their local schools, without pay if needed. A strong volunteer spirit is present (59 percent indicated they would volunteer). Nearly three-fourths of the parents of children in public schools are willing to volunteer. Differences are apparent in certain segments of the population. Women are more amenable than men (64 percent to 54 percent) and whites are more willing to volunteer than nonwhites

(61 percent to 49 percent); and persons in small communities (2,500 to 49,999 persons) are more amenable to serving schools than those of larger size (one million or more persons) by a margin of 71 percent to 53 percent. College graduates express more willingness to provide unpaid volunteer work (71 percent) than persons with high school and grade-school education (57 percent and 45 percent, respectively).

Volunteerism Data

Despite the considerable attention directed to the importance of volunteers in the educational process, there is little reliable data about the amount of service provided by volunteers. The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics maintains information regarding volunteerism in schools. The data, despite limitations on data collection presented by the methodology, provides interesting information about the use of school volunteers in the United States (Michael, 1990).

In 1987-88, administrators estimated the number of volunteers providing services in their schools. The data support the widespread use of volunteers in education. There was little difference in the percentage of volunteerism among public and private schools reporting the use of volunteers (60 and 65 percent, respectively). Larger schools reported more volunteers than small schools, elementary schools reported higher use than middle or high schools.

The data reveal that public schools with minority enrollment of 50 percent or more reported fewer volunteers, on average, than schools with lower minority enrollment. These findings may be a result of the general presence of high minority enrollment schools in areas of low-income residents. The researchers suggested that the parents in these areas may be less likely to have either the time or energy to participate in volunteerism activities.

The research also indicates that irrespective of school size or location and the makeup of the student bodies or teaching staff, educators view volunteers as a useful component of the education process. Michael's (1990) review of 1985 data included information on the activities of volunteers. Results indicate that the major focus of volunteer activity was instructional support (e.g., tutoring, grading) followed closely by extracurricular support (e.g., athletics, clubs, trips, libraries). A few volunteers provided management or advisory support.

Virginia Experience

Volunteerism Data

The study team analyzed the National Center for Education Statistics' data specific to Virginia. Unfortunatley, the only state data available were for private school volunteerism. Results revealed a great diversity in the number of volunteers working in different schools. Many schools reported no volunteers and a few schools reported sizeable numbers of volunteers.

Focus Groups

Although the Focus Group questions did not specifically speak to school volunteer programs, participants commented on effective volunteer programs throughout their discussion of parental involvement and employee leave for school service. Participants agree that volunteers have offered meaningful services to public schools.

Parents and educators agree that schools have not been sufficiently flexible in their scheduling and operations to take advantage of additional volunteer support. The consensus is that many schools have not been able to use the volunteer time now available because schools do not consistently have effective methods for handling volunteers.

Summary and Conclusions

Volunteers provide a valuable extension of school resources. There is a strong volunteer spirit in this country, as the majority of parents with children in public schools are willing to provide volunteer service. Virginia public schools have many active volunteer programs, yet there is great diversity in the nature and extent of volunteer programs.

Parents, educators and business personnel believe that schools can improve their volunteer programs. Effective volunteer programs require allocation of school resources, especially staff time for coordination and planning.

CHAPTER IV.

EMPLOYEE LEAVE FOR SCHOOL SERVICE

Overview

As parents and volunteers consider increasing their involvement in public schools, many are confronted by the conflict between the expectations of the work place and their need to be active participants in education programs. This Chapter presents background information regarding employee leave policies, with specific attention to leave for school service. The status of employee leave in Virginia is presented, based upon analysis of the survey disseminated to members of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce and the themes presented in Focus Groups involving business leaders.

Background

The changing demographics of the workforce have substantial implications for the business community. Businesses face an increase in working couples. In 65 percent of two-parent families, both parents work. Seventy percent of single mothers work (Hewlett, 1989). Since 1980, the number of working mothers has increased from 23 percent to 40 percent of all working women (Luciano, 1992). By 1995, two-thirds of all preschool children and three-fourths of school-aged children will have mothers in the workforce. This new workforce has different priorities, which including family interests.

Companies of every size, in every region of the country, have responded to these demographics by the successful use of work and family initiatives. Although businesses recognize their social responsibility to be responsive to family issues, the primary purpose for accommodating family concerns in the work place is productivity. The Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, in its 1991 report, **"Education Reform Initiatives,"** observed that employees' productivity is diminished by problems their children are having at school. The report affirmed that employers benefit from attention to children's needs by increased productivity and morale and decreased absenteeism and turnover by working parents.

Employers recognize that employees are more productive when the company responds to issues that are important to them. Businesses offer a diversity of family benefits and leave opportunities to attract and retain employees and maintain productivity. Employers create on-site child care, elder care and flexible, responsive leave policies in response to family issues (Spruel, 1986; McNeeley and Fogarty, 1988).

There is a trend in both the public and private sectors to reduce the number of different personnel policies. Some

businesses combine traditional types of leave (e.g., sick, vacation, annual, parental and school related leave) into one leave category, "Paid Time Off." The supervisor grants this leave.

There is no national consensus on accommodations employers should provide to enable employees to cope with those personal and social pressures that impact on the work environment. Many businesses continue to maintain existing policies. These policies may result in employees feeling that they are unable to serve as employees and members of families. Employees claim that their employers believe that work must come first, to the exclusion of the family. Such employers have not addressed the worker as a family member (Friedman, 1991).

The recent national political debate regarding family-mandated parental leave (maternity/paternity leave) points to employer resistance to government-imposed mandates. The business community believes that employers should be the primary players in dealing with work and family issues, not the government. The United States Chamber of Commerce has opposed mandatory leaves, and has voiced special concerns about the difficulty small businesses will have in adapting to government-prescribed benefits (McNeeley and Fogarety, 1989; Peters, Peters and Caropreso, 1990).

Quality schools require parental involvement, and employers are beginning to recognize the need to give parents time for involvement in schools. Some business-education reformers believe that employers who do not allow this benefit are contributing to the problems facing public education today.

The Virginia Chamber of Commerce's 1991 report notes "advocating greater parental involvement in education makes good business sense." Among the barriers to parental involvement in the educational process cited in the report was the need to take vacation time to attend to important school activities. The Chamber recommended that businesses consider creating more flexible opportunities for working parents to be participants in school events and conferences during working hours.

The Virginia Plan for Strengthening the Commonwealth's 21st Century Workforce (Workforce 2000) urged employers to provide opportunities at the worksite for parents to learn about becoming involved in their children's education.

Many employers are now introducing or modifying leave policies that facilitate involvement in schools. (Appendix F provides examples of employer practices.)

Virginia Experience

Governor Wilder's employee leave initiative allows a sizeable number of persons in the Commonwealth the opportunity to take leave, without penalty, to participate in school activities. Leadership at the Governor's level is important for initiating such a change in policy. The Superintendent of Public Instruction communicated similar support to all personnel within the Department of Education at the beginning of the 1992-93 school year (Appendix G).

In 1991, the Virginia Chamber of Commerce conducted a survey of its members to assess responsiveness to the growing need for family-supportive personnel policies (Cheatham, 1992). The results indicated that approximately 30 percent of responding companies (large and small) provide "paid leave to attend school functions/conferences," with another 20 percent indicating they would consider such a policy. The Chamber report revealed that manufacturing industries were more reluctant to provide paid leave for parents to attend school functions and conferences than either banking or private sector enterprises.

Focus Groups

In Focus Group meetings, representatives from the business community expressed varying points of view about issues surrounding employee leave and the involvement of their employees in the schools. Business leaders and representatives expressed sincere commitment to the public schools and a strong desire to provide support where possible. A summary of their responses to issues associated with employee leave for school services are presented according to the questions. Also included are the comments of parents and educators specific to employee leave. (Focus Group methodology is reported in Appendix B).

1. What kinds of provisions does your company make for full time and part-time employees to be involved in their children's education?

- Generous vacation and leave packages, including personal leave, sick leave, and paid time off.
- Written policies defining the different types of leave and conditions required for approval and informal policies that allow for school involvement within existing annual and vacation leave allotments.
- Flexibility in allowing informal employee leave through paid time off or the opportunity to make up lost time (flextime).
- Cross training for employees who work shifts that allows

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time off, with supervisory approval.

2. What kind of in-house activities does your company conduct to promote employee involvement in the schools?

- Medium-size to large companies represented permit parents and other employees to become involved in the schools and to provide services to the schools for the company.
- Willingness to adjust schedules and work assignments, where possible, to accommodate requests for leave for school service.
- Availability of video tapes, books, and parent training seminars.

3. What are the restraining forces that influence parental involvement in the schools?

- Loss of pay by hourly employees when not at work, limiting their incentive to provide school service during work hours.
- Potential adverse impact of the Fair Labor Standards Act (some non-exempt employees must be paid time and a half for overtime when school service time and work time total more than 40 hours for the defined week).

4. What are the driving forces that encourage parental involvement in the schools (from the employer perspective)?

- There are sufficient opportunities for involvement through generous vacations packages and liberal leave policies provided by many companies.
- Existing personnel practices and policies are flexible, permiting employees to be involved in public schools.

5. What are the issues of concern in your company surrounding paid employee leave for service in schools?

- Potential abuse of leave granted for school service.
- Additional cost of granting paid leave for school service.
- Difficulty in scheduling leave.
- Inadequate return for the fiscal investment of granting leave for school service.
- Need for a strong commitment among employees sufficient to invest some of their own time to provide school service.

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- Reluctance to develop policies and practices to provide employee leave specifically for school service.

- More than adequate volunteer time is available for school service under existing work rules.

6. Explain how you feel about companies granting paid leave to their employees to volunteer in schools and to visit schools on behalf of their children.

Parents

- Need good record keeping and documentation to evaluate effectiveness.

- Oppose legislation that mandates employee leave.

- Predict businesses will not endorse paid leave due to cost.

- Prefer use of flex-time or existing leave options.

Educators

- More parents can become involved in the schools, especially parents who would otherwise lose pay.

- Employees should use existing leave for school service.

- Would be disruptive to some businesses.

- Wonderful idea, yet need to establish criteria and accountability.

- Educators must provide meaningful services for parents to perform.

- Opposed to legislation requiring enforcement; legislation would not be productive.

- Incentives (e.g., tax breaks) are better than mandates.

7. In what ways might paid employee leave for school service benefit your company? (improved employee morale, increased productivity, lower absenteeism, etc.)

- Although participants commented that employee leave for school service would not benefit their companies, they noted that employees may be more productive on the job, and the company may enjoy good public relations.

The prevailing sentiment of all Focus Group participants was not supportive of legislation mandating parental leave for school service. While providing parents with the opportunity for school

service without loss of income has value to some, Focus Group members felt that legislation to achieve that objective would alienate companies that are currently providing support to schools on voluntarily.

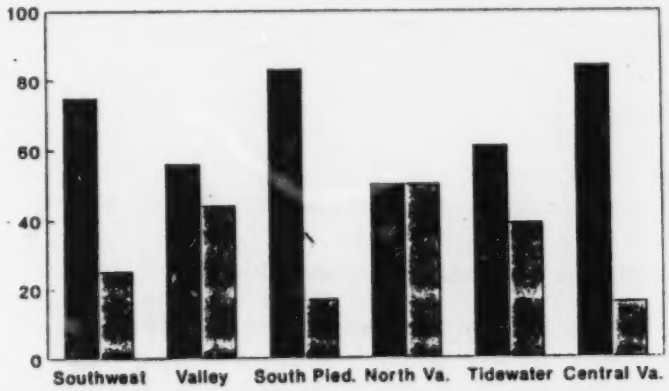
Survey of Virginia Businesses

The Department of Education surveyed Virginia State Chamber of Commerce member businesses to identify current practices regarding employee leave for school service. The Chamber sent the survey to nearly 1800 different businesses members in its August 1992 newsletter. (Appendix C displays the newsletter and Appendix D presents the survey methodology.)

There was a low response rate, as survey recipients completed the survey voluntarily. This response rate limits the study team's ability to draw conclusions regarding statewide practice. However, analysis of the 118 responses provides useful information regarding the current status of policies regarding employee leave for school service.

Eighty-five employers allow leave for school services. Twenty-one employers have specific policies addressing school service. Of the 34 respondents who do not allow leave, 15 would consider allowing it. Public service organizations and service companies are more likely to allow leave than other types of business (e.g., manufacturing, mining, retail, hospital/medical). Many of the public service organizations are state agencies(reflecting the impact of the state employee leave policy enacted by the Governor). Businesses offering leave for school service are dispersed throughout the state (Figure 2).

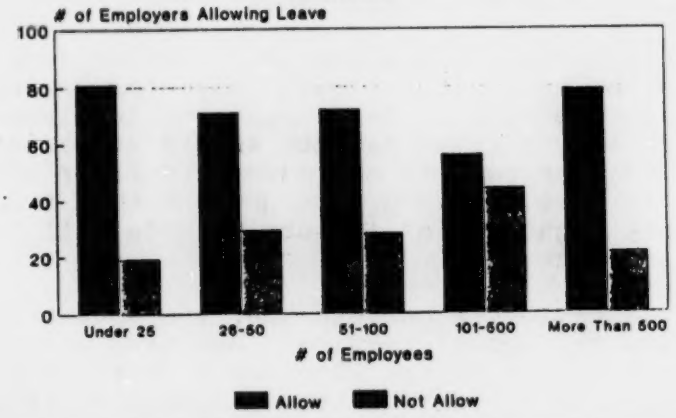
FIGURE 2: BUSINESSES OFFERING LEAVE FOR SCHOOL SERVICE -- GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



Source: Staff analysis of survey.

The majority of Virginia companies are under 100 employees (41 percent between 5 and 100; 57 percent under 5). However, the majority of the private workforce works in medium-sized or big businesses with 100 employees or more (O'Donnell, 1991). Businesses of all sizes allow leave for school service (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3: BUSINESSES OFFERING LEAVE FOR SCHOOL SERVICE -- SIZE



Source: Staff analysis of survey.

Only 11 percent of businesses statewide have a specific policy for school service. The majority of these (59 percent) are state agencies. Other businesses use a variety of existing leave policies. A wide variety of leave types are available for use for school service, with paid annual leave, paid personal leave, flex-time and leave without pay as the most commonly available types of leave (Figure 4). Appendix F presents examples of employer approaches to leave for service in schools.

FIGURE 4: LEAVE TYPES OFFERED FOR SCHOOL SERVICE

paid annual leave	paid personal leave
paid administrative leave	paid special school service leave
flex time	paid sick leave
paid time off	leave without pay

Source: Staff analysis of survey.

Employers allow a wide range of hours of leave for school service, extending from less than one day per year to an unlimited amount of leave (with supervisor approval). The most

predominant types reported were leave without pay, paid annual leave, paid personal leave, flex-time and paid time off.

Summary and Conclusions

Employers in Virginia, as their counterparts throughout the country, recognize the importance of the involvement of their employees in their children's schooling. In Virginia, employers use a variety of written and unwritten policies to provide employees time to participate in school activities related to their children. Employee involvement is highest when there is a commitment from business leadership.

Both parents and educators identify positive and negative features to the provision of paid leave for school service. Participants view such leave as enabling involvement of many parents, yet many believe parents should use existing leave policies. Neither parents nor educators favor mandating leave for school service. Both groups comment that schools need to improve their organization if more parents will be using leave for school service.

Virginia employers believe that the government should not mandate leave for school service. Business leaders believe employers should retain the autonomy to respond to their employees' desire to participate in school activities, according to the demands of each particular business.

CHAPTER V.

SCHOOL BUSINESS-PARTNERSHIPS

Overview

The involvement of the business community in public education has a positive impact on school programs, resource and community attitudes (Workforce 2000). This chapter discusses the nature of school-business partnerships, with a particular focus on Virginia experiences: surveys conducted by the Departments of Volunteerism and Education, focus group comments, and the Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program.

Background

Historically, American businesses have played active roles in supporting education programs. Over the years, businesses have provided volunteers, provided equipment and other resources, provided part-time jobs, created scholarships and provided awards (Rigden, 1991). In recent years, however, there has been a shift to provide more human resources than merely financial. Business involvement is focusing on meeting the needs of all students, frequently embracing at-risk students. This is in contrast with earlier efforts frequently targeted at top students. Businesses identify many benefits of school-business partnerships: improved public relations, improved employee morale, and improved perspectives on the part of business and education professionals alike.

Many communities have initiated efforts to strengthen ties between schools and local businesses. Schools have benefitted from the resources provided by businesses and the business sector has enjoyed the community's good will in response to their efforts.

Partnerships are more common among big companies than among small and medium-sized companies. The lack of personnel resources and insufficient knowledge of the value of partnerships are seen as barriers in smaller companies.

Partnerships take many forms, including adopt-a-school (one company in partnership with one school, focusing on fiscal and human resource needs). Another model is the project-driven partnership, focusing on close interaction to address specific academic or social programs. Other businesses provide school personnel with valuable support in the area of business management.

Virginia Experience

Virginia business leaders believe the future of American

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business depends on the quality of our educational system (Workforce 200, Virginia Small Business Advisory Board, 1989, 1990). Many businesses have been increasingly responsive to education issues, recognizing the need for cooperation between employees and the schools.

School-Community Partnerships

The Virginia Chamber of Commerce, the Virginia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives, and the Department of Education assisted the Department of Volunteerism in conducting a statewide survey of school/community partnerships (Harrison, 1991). Responses from 115 school districts, indicated a wide diversity among the partnership activities taking place in the Commonwealth. "Adopt-a-School" programs were the most popular form of partnership. Eighty-five percent of all districts reported business involvement in school programs. The more successful partnerships were well organized and had written agreements between schools and local organizations/businesses.

Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program

Workforce 2000 envisioned the creation of a catalyst bringing together business and education leaders to promote high quality education in Virginia. In 1992, the Virginia Office of Volunteerism, the Virginia Chamber of Commerce and the Virginia Department of Education formed the Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program (VBEPP). VBEPP was a natural outgrowth of the Workforce 2000's recommendation that the Commonwealth create a system to promote the development and support of partnerships between business and education. Such partnerships have the following goals: to develop and support cooperation between business and education in Virginia; to create a business challenge grant program; and to recognize exemplary efforts of schools, communities and businesses working together to address high priority educational needs.

To accomplish these goals, VBEPP has initiated the following activities:

- developing standards for business-education partnerships;
- providing technical assistance to communities interested in establishing school-business partnerships;
- providing information and research on certain education issues;
- coordinating and facilitating public relations and communication;

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- maintaining a resource library; and,
- making presentations at state and national levels.

Department of Education Survey

In the summer of 1992, the Department of Education surveyed 135 school divisions regarding the status of school-business partnerships in each division. Of the 117 responses received, 74 percent had either a division-wide or school-based partnership program. The remainder of the divisions had no program, or were planning programs. The majority of schools have assigned staff to coordinate partnership program. Divisions identified a variety of measures that the VBEPP might employ to assist divisions, including: start-up planning, technical assistance for existing programs, training for school personnel and public relations materials.

Focus Groups

Although the Focus Group questions did not specifically speak to school-business partnership programs, participants offered comments on effective programs throughout their discussion of parental involvement and employee leave for school service.

Many schools and school divisions have established school business partnerships and foundations. Business representatives serve on advisory committees that work on apprenticeship programs, mentor programs and policy committees. Their aim is bring parents and citizens into the schools to serve as partners.

Representatives from large companies were strong supporters of putting employees in classrooms to serve as speakers, instructors on special topics and advisors. Employees also serve as policy advisors and management consultants to school boards administrators. These practices require flexibility and coordination.

Several companies sponsor other school activities in the schools such as sports tournaments, reading days, and career days. Professional and salaried employees (who typically have more flexibility than hourly workers) become involved in company-sponsored school activities during work hours.

Survey of Virginia Businesses

The Department of Education's survey of members of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce questioned employers regarding their participation in school-business partnerships. Results indicate that 35 percent of responding businesses participate in school-business partnerships. Of the 78 reporting businesses without

school-business partnerships, 15 (22 percent) indicate an interest in learning more about them from VBEPP.

A review of survey results reveals no difference in the allowance of employee leave for school service among business with and without school business partnerships (73 percent and 68 percent respectively).

Summary and Conclusions

Businesses in Virginia, as in the nation, are demonstrating their commitment to education through active participation in school-business partnerships. These partnerships take a variety of forms in Virginia, from adopt-a-school to one-on-one volunteer programs. School and business personnel find value in the establishment of effective partnerships programs.

The Commonwealth is demonstrating leadership through establishment of the Virginia Business Education Partnership Program. This program is providing technical assistance and resources to localities in the process of development of school-business partnerships.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Education team studied the issues associated with parental leave for school service presented in the study resolution. These include: the impact of parental involvement and volunteerism in education; models of parental involvement; factors influencing employee leave for school service, from the perspectives of business, school, and parent perspectives; models of employee leave for school activities; and school business-partnerships.

Focus group analysis revealed that educators, parents, and business leaders in Virginia value parental involvement in education. Parents and other volunteers extend school resources. The focus group participants offered numerous examples of innovative methods for involving parents and community volunteers in use by many schools throughout the Commonwealth. Data analysis reveals there is great diversity in the nature and extent of school volunteer programs in Virginia. Effective parent and volunteer programs require organization and allocation of staff resources.

Educators, parents, and business leaders in focus groups identified many barriers to effective parental involvement in education. These include parent work schedules, staff time and resources, and educator and parent attitudes.

Analysis of the research and the survey of members of the State Chamber of Commerce revealed that businesses use a variety of written and unwritten policies to provide parents with time to participate in school activities. Focus group analysis confirmed the trend noted in the research that employee involvement is highest when there is a commitment from the business leadership.

Focus group analysis and the survey of employers revealed that Virginia employers believe that the government should not mandate leave for school service. Many parent and educator participants in focus group echoed this sentiment.

A number of businesses demonstrate their commitment to education through active participation in school-business partnerships. The Virginia Business Education Partnership Program, created by the Virginia Department of Education, the Virginia Office of Volunteerism and the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, is providing leadership in the development of such partnerships.

The study team also identified effective practices of employee leave, parental involvement and school-business partnerships implemented in the Commonwealth. Appendices E and F

provide information for parents, schools, or businesses that are begining or revising initiatives in these areas.

The Department of Education concludes that the Commonwealth should continue its efforts to expand parent and volunteer involvement in public schools, through the actions of educators, employers and parents. Provision of leave to employees to provide services to schools and participate in school activities facilitates such parental and volunteer involvement. Specifically, the Department following recommendations:

- Schools should recognize the importance of parental involvement in public education through parent-responsive school policies. These may include accommodating parent work schedules in establishing conferences and meetings, establishing formal parent education/volunteer programs, and heightening educator awareness of the needs of non-traditional and non middle class families.

- Virginia educators should capitalize on the resources available to schools through volunteers. An effective volunteer program requires assignment of personnel to the responsibilities associated with administration of the program.

- Employers are encouraged to demonstrate their commitment to public education by recognizing the need for employees to have time to participate in local schools. This commitment should be articulated by the business's leadership.

- The Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program should continue its efforts to develop exemplary school-business partnerships in the Commonwealth.

- The Office of Volunteerism should expand its resource library to include information on employee leave policies that promote parental involvement in schools.

- The Commonwealth should not mandate employee leave for school service for private employers.

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APPENDIX A

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 230

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA--1992 SESSION

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 230

Requesting the Department of Education to study parental leave time for service in the public schools.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 5, 1992
Agreed to by the Senate, March 4, 1992

WHEREAS, recent national reform efforts in public education emphasize the benefits of parental involvement in education and the necessity of developing effective strategies that reinforce the responsibility and promote meaningful participation of parents in their children's education at all grade levels; and

WHEREAS, parents are the primary educators of their children and this role and responsibility should be acknowledged and allowed to flourish by schools assisting parents in this endeavor; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that when parents are actively involved in the educational process, including instruction, and are assisted in obtaining and enhancing their teaching skills, children's academic achievement increases, school discipline problems decrease, and communication is improved and facilitated between both parents and children, and between parents and schools; and

WHEREAS, effective schools have been those which promote good communication between school and the home, involving parents in their children's learning and sharing the responsibility for school governance with parents; and

WHEREAS, in many cases today, due to changing social conditions and pressing economic realities, both parents must work, and in the case of many single-parent families, whether a parent will work may not be a simple matter of choice; and

WHEREAS, schools, parents, and the business community working together can promote learning, provide wholesome and productive activities, encourage children to succeed, and prepare youth for the future; and

WHEREAS, "it can no longer be assumed that parents who lack knowledge themselves lack interest in their children's learning or in the school that they attend"; and

WHEREAS, due to the demands of work and other family responsibilities, and because school and work hours often conflict, it has become increasingly more difficult for parents to participate fully in the school life of their children; and

WHEREAS, parental involvement in education provides parents an opportunity to emphasize and reinforce the value of learning and to demonstrate their commitment to and interest in the academic success of children through active participation in the life of the school; and

WHEREAS, benefits to children, families, schools and society abound when parents are encouraged to and assisted in becoming involved in the education of their children, including instruction; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000: A Partnership for Excellence has recommended employer-supported programs which encourage parents to become involved in their children's schools through leave time to serve on school boards, worksite programs for parents on how to become active participants in their children's education, and flexible hours for parent-teacher conferences; and

WHEREAS, Governor Wilder has recently approved a policy for state employees which provides eight hours of paid leave each year to encourage and allow them to become more active in their local schools; and

WHEREAS, Governor Wilder has appointed a Workforce Virginia 2000 Advocacy Council, consisting of members of the General Assembly and representatives of the business, industry, and education communities to oversee implementation of the Workforce Virginia 2000 Advisory Committee's recommendations and an Advisory Council, composed of the Department of Education, the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, and the Office of Volunteerism, to implement the Workforce Virginia 2000 Business-Education Partnership Program; and

WHEREAS, when the human needs and responsibilities of employees are an integral factor and positively addressed in company decisions, businesses ultimately benefit, and it is possible for businesses to develop ways to grant leave time to parents of school-age children which uniquely fit company structure and do not adversely affect the work flow; and

WHEREAS, businesses which grant leave time to parents may realize increased productivity and profit when parental interest and participation in the education of their children are encouraged; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that parents whose employers grant them leave time for service in public schools are genuinely welcomed, will be allowed to participate fully in the life of the school, and are permitted to use their leave time productively while present at the school; and

WHEREAS, the interest of parents in the education of their children and the investment of the business community in public education in this manner would enhance communication and cooperation between the parents, schools, and the workplace; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Education be requested to study parental leave time to promote parental involvement and service in the public schools. The Department is requested to (i) determine the number of school divisions which actively encourage and provide opportunities for parental involvement; (ii) determine the extent to which parents are actively included in the learning process of their children in such school divisions; (iii) ascertain the number, types, and location of businesses, and the kind of leave time policies offered; (iv) determine the number and types of, and ways to increase school-business partnerships; (v) identify successful models of parental leave in the private sector; (vi) report the hours of service rendered by parents, specifically parents who provide such service on leave time granted by employers; (vii) recommend ways to encourage businesses in the Commonwealth to grant employees who are parents, guardians, and custodians of school-age children leave time for participation in school activities; and (viii) recommend ways to promote parental involvement in the public schools and the implementation of school-business partnership programs throughout the Commonwealth.

The Department shall confer with and shall request the Department of Economic Development, the State Chamber of Commerce, the Workforce Virginia 2000 Advocacy Council, and the Governor's Advisory Council on the Implementation of the Workforce Virginia 2000 Business-Education Partnership Program to provide technical assistance as may be necessary during the course of the study.

The Department shall complete its work in time to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1993 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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APPENDIX B

METHODOLOGY OF THE FOCUS GROUPS

The Department conducted a series of focus group sessions with parents, educators and business leaders to collect candid, qualitative information regarding their perceptions and experiences with parental involvement and employee leave for service in public schools. The focus group procedures were derived from the methodology discussed by Krueger (1988).

Sessions were held in four regions of the state -- Southwest, Southside, the Richmond Metropolitan/Hampton Roads areas, and Northern Virginia. Twelve sessions were conducted, one each for parents, business leaders, and education officials in each region.

Participants were selected to ensure cross sectional representation among the participants. The type and size of a school division or business, socioeconomic status and racial or ethnic identity of the participant, gender, and age were considered.

The Regional Vice Presidents of the Virginia Congress of Parents and Teachers in each of the four regions selected the parent participants. The Chamber of Commerce in each region identified business leaders. School superintendents in each region were invited to send a representative to the educators' focus groups. The team also worked with the Department of Education's Regional Representatives in each region to select school officials.

The focus groups were designed to be small, in an effort to ensure maximum participation of all participants. At least four, and no more than ten persons were present at each session. The sessions were one to two hours in length. Each focus group was led by a moderator. Background information and a brief introduction was given at each session. An explanation of how the focus group session was to be conducted and the ground rules were included. The discussion centered around six or seven open-ended questions introduced by the moderator in a nondirective manner. As participants responded to issues surrounding the questions, the moderator probed for further information or elaboration. Sessions were recorded, then transcribed and compiled for analysis and inclusion in the final report.

Focus Group Ground Rules:

- Speak freely, expressing differing points of view; we are just as interested in negative comments as positive comments.
- There are no right or wrong answers, just differing points of view.
- Only one person should speak at a time.
- We are tape recording the session only because we do not want to miss or misinterpret anyone's comments. You can be assured of confidentially; no comments will be attributed to a single individual, only to the statewide group.
- The session will last about one and a half to two hours.
- There will be no break; feel free to use the rest rooms during the session.

Focus Group Guiding Questions

- What has been the experience of parents, business leaders, and schools officials with parental involvement in schools and employee leave for school service?
- What are the driving and restraining forces operating on parental involvement in schools and employee leave for school service for parents, business leaders, and school officials?
- How can parental involvement in education be increased?

Specific Focus Group Questions:

Educators

- In what ways have parents been involved in the schools in your division?
- What are the driving forces that encourage parental involvement in the schools in your division?
- What are the restraining forces that discourage parental involvement in the schools presented by parents?
- What are the restraining forces that discourage parental involvement in the schools presented by schools?
- Explain how you feel about companies granting paid leave to their employees to volunteer in schools and to visit schools on behalf of their children?
- If increasing numbers of employers begin granting paid leave to employees to volunteer in the schools, what kinds of meaningful activities would the volunteers be performing?
- What can schools do to encourage more parental involvement in the schools?
- What would be some of the benefits of increased parental involvement?

Business Representatives

- What kinds of provisions does your company make for full-time and part-time employees to be involved in their children's education?
- What are the restraining forces that permit less than desirable parental involvement in the schools?
- What are the driving forces that encourage parental involvement in the schools?
- What are the issues of concern in your company surrounding paid employee leave for service in schools?
- What kinds of in-house activities does your company conduct to promote employee involvement in the schools? (e.g., flex-time, parent training seminars, brown bag lunches)

- In what ways might paid employee leave for school service benefit your company? (improved employee morale, increased productivity, lower absenteeism, etc.)

- In what ways would your company consider expanding its policies and practices that would promote increased parental involvement in schools?

Parents

- In what ways have you as a parent been involved in the schools in your locality?

- What benefits have resulted from your involvement in the schools? For your child? For the school? For you?

- What are the restraining forces that discourage parental involvement in the schools presented by parents?

- What are the restraining forces that discourage parental involvement in the schools presented by schools?

- What are the driving forces that encourage parental involvement in the schools in your locality?

- Explain how you feel about companies granting paid leave to their employees to volunteer in schools and to visit schools on behalf of their children?

- If increasing numbers of employers begin granting paid leave to employees to volunteer in the schools, in what kinds of meaningful activities would you like to participate?

- What can schools do to encourage more parental involvement in the schools?

- What would be some of the benefits of increased parental involvement?

APPENDIX C

VIRGINIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESSES SURVEY

Dear Chamber Member,

I am requesting your assistance with an issue of great importance to me, the involvement of parents in their children's schools. I sponsored House Joint Resolution 230 (passed by the 1992 General Assembly), requesting the Virginia Department of Education to study employee leave time for service in public schools.

As a component of this study, the Department of Education is ascertaining the number, types and location of businesses offering employee leave for school service, and the leave policies offered. Further, models of employee leave for school service will be identified and publicized in the report.

Enclosed within this newsletter is a survey developed by the Virginia Department of Education. Please ask your employee benefits manager to complete this and forward copies of policies to the Department of Education.

Thank you for your assistance!

Delegate Linda T. (Toddy) Puller (44th District)

The Virginia Department of Education is completing a study of parental leave time for service in the public schools, in response to House Joint Resolution 230 of the 1992 Virginia General Assembly (sponsored by Delegate Linda Puller, Mt. Vernon). We need your help in identifying the number, types and location of businesses offering policies for such service. All responses will remain anonymous. Information will be summarized statewide. Please ask your employee benefits manager to complete this questionnaire and return it to the Department of Education by September 1, 1992.

Please complete the following identifying information:

Name of Person completing the survey: _____

Business Name _____

Telephone Number: _____

Type of Business:
___ *Public Service (State)* ___ *Hospital/Medical* ___ *Mining*
___ *Public Service (Local)* ___ *Banking* ___ *Transportation/utilities*
___ *Manufacturing* ___ *Farming*
___ *Retail* ___ *Other(please Specify)* _____

Location of Business:
___ *Town of* _____
___ *City of* _____
___ *County of* _____

Number of Employees:
___ *Under 25*
___ *26-50*
___ *51-100*
___ *101-500*
___ *More than 500*

---

1. Does your company allow employee leave for school service (e.g. parental meetings, volunteerism)?

___ *Yes* ___ *No*

IF ANSWER TO QUESTION 1 IS NO - Please complete the following: (Check all that apply)

2. Would you consider allowing employee leave for school service?

___ *Yes* ___ *No*

Which of the following would you consider? (Check all that apply)

Type of Leave:
___ *Paid Annual Leave*
___ *Paid Personal Leave*
___ *Paid Administrative Leave*
___ *Paid Special School Service Leave*
___ *Flextime*
___ *Paid Sick Leave*
___ *Paid Time Off*
___ *Leave Without Pay*
___ *Other* _____

Frequency of Volunteer Leave:
___ *Less than one day per year*
___ *One day per year*
___ *More than one day per year*
___ *One day per week*
___ *One day per month*
___ *Unlimited with Supervisor approval*
___ *Other* _____

IF YES TO QUESTION 1 - Please complete the following:

3. Which of the following is allowed by your company/organization?

Type of Leave:
___ *Paid Annual Leave*
___ *Paid Personal Leave*
___ *Paid Administrative Leave*
___ *Paid Special School Service Leave*
___ *Flextime*
___ *Paid Sick Leave*
___ *Paid Time Off*
___ *Leave Without Pay*
___ *Other* _____

Frequency of Volunteer Leave:
___ *Less than one day per year*
___ *One day per year*
___ *More than one day per year*
___ *One day per week*
___ *One day per month*
___ *Unlimited with Supervisor approval*
___ *Other* _____

Please continue on the reverse side of this page

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4. *Does your company have a* **WRITTEN LEAVE POLICY**, *either specific or general, regarding volunteer and/or leave to attend school function/conference activities?*

_____ Yes _____ No

5. *Please provide a copy of the written policy or describe the policy. (i.e. number of hours or days allowed, types of leave available, under what conditions, etc.)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

☐ *Please check if the Department of Education may include this policy in the Appendix of the report to the Virginia General Assembly.*

6. *Is your company/organization currently involved in a school/business partnership?*

_____ Yes _____ No

☐ *Please check if you would like the Virginia Business Education Partnership to provide you with further information.*

A Summary of the results will be provided in a future issue of the "Advocate."

Fold & Staple

_____

Place
Stamp
Here

Dr. Lissa Power-Cluver
Virginia Department of Education
P.O. Box 6Q
Richmond, VA 23216-2060

APPENDIX D

METHODOLOGY OF THE SURVEY OF VIRGINIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERS

To secure information on the practices and policies of companies in Virginia related to school service, the team distributed a survey through the monthly newsletter of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce to 1787 member companies. Recipients were instructed to ask the company's employee benefits manager to complete the survey to ensure accuracy of the information and that only one response was received from each company.

Data concerning the following questions were extracted from the survey, analyzed, and incorporated into the report:

- What percentage of employers offer any type of leave for service in schools?
- What types of leave are offered by companies?
- What percentage of employers offer leave specific for school service?
- What percentage of employers allow leave for school service within existing employee leave structure?
- Of employers who allow leave for school service, what is the frequency of leave provided?
- Of employers who do not allow employee leave for school service, what percentage would consider allowing employees leave?
- What percentage of respondents are involved in school business partnerships?
- What percentage of respondents, not involved in school business partnerships wish to receive further information?

A total of 122 responses were obtained. The small sample size limits ability to report valid findings or draw conclusions specific to subsamples (e.g., type, size or location of business).

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APPENDIX E

EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: EDUCATORS
♦ open communication/invitations to visit informally
♦ invite retired teachers, grandparents to schools
♦ personal invitations from teachers to parents
♦ offer school programs that involve students (e.g., concerts, plays)
♦ recognize volunteers with special activities or awards
♦ offer flexible times for school conferences (before and after traditional work hours)
♦ moving PTA meetings to other locations (within community or major work setting)
♦ support of parental involvement at the highest administrative levels

Source: Staff analysis of Focus Group responses.

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EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: PARENTS
♦ Parent Teacher Association • help principal to organize PTA at school level • be involved in programs • volunteer for leadership o PTA • participate in workshops and summer institutes • sponsor fund raising activities • provide transportation to meetings, activities • sponsor active parenting programs
♦ "Political" activities • speak to school board/board of supervisors • work for bond issues • lobby for state legislation
♦ Fund raising activities • carnivals, bake sales, programs with admission, spaghetti dinners • fund drives for purchasing specific equipment
♦ Committee Service • family life education • implementation of Standards of Learning • school/community advisory committees • textbook adoption • welcome non-English speaking families
♦ School volunteer activities • read to classes • grade papers • train volunteers • share careers on career days • mentorships • school beautification/clean up • assist with field trips • organize/implement teacher appreciation days • relieve teachers from class duties for breaks • assist with hearing/vision screening • assist with physical education testing
♦ Share professional skills at school • nurses demonstrate baby care • translate school newsletters for non-English speaking parents
♦ Personnel • work as a substitute teacher • work as a bus driver

Source: Staff analysis of Focus Group responses.

APPENDIX F
EXAMPLES OF POLICIES FOR PROVIDING EMPLOYEES OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA EMPLOYEES

SCHOOL LEAVE POLICY - Department of Personnel and Training Policy 4.06 - 8 hours of leave per calendar year granted to meet with a teacher or administrator or to perform any school approved volunteer work.

OBJECTIVE AND INTENT:
To promote employee's involvement in the education of Virginia's youth, and to promote employees' assistance to schools, it is the policy of the Commonwealth to provide its employees paid leave from work to participate in school activities.

PROCEDURES

I. PURPOSE OF LEAVE

A. Employees may take leave under this policy to meet with teacher or administrator of any elementary school, middle school, or high school concerning the employees' children, step-children, or children over whom the employees have custody. Employees also may take leave to attend any school function in which such children are participating.

B. In addition, any employee may take leave under this policy to perform any school-approved volunteer work to assist any public elementary school, middle school, or high school. Any teacher or school administrator may provide approval for the volunteer work.

II. AMOUNT OF LEAVE

A. Full-time employees may take up to eight hours of paid leave per calendar year under this policy. The eight hours of leave will be credited to employees on January 1 of each year. The paid leave granted under this policy is in addition to other paid leave (e.g., annual leave) provided to employees.

B. Part-time employees will be provided leave under this policy based on the proportion they work of a

40-hour week. For example, a part-time employee scheduled to work 20 hours per week would be entitled to one-half of the leave to which a full-time employee is entitled (i.e., four hours) under this policy. This leave also will be credited on January 1 of each year.

C. All new full-time employees will be credited with the full eight hours of leave under this policy immediately upon their employment. New part-time employees will be credited immediately upon their employment with their proportionate amounts of leave in accordance with Article II.B.

III. FORFEITURE OF LEAVE

Leave not taken under this policy in a calendar year will be forfeited; it will not be carried over into the next calendar year. Additionally, employees will not be entitled to payment for this leave upon separation from state service.

IV. APPROVAL OF LEAVE

A. Employees must receive approval from their supervisors regarding the scheduling of their leave under this policy.

B. If feasible, leave should be granted for the period of time requested by the employee. An agency, however, may require that the leave be taken at a different time, based on the needs of the agency.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

Agency heads and human resource officers are responsible for ensuring consistent application of this policy within their agencies or facilities.

VI. COVERAGE OF PERSONNEL

This policy is applicable to all positions covered under the Virginia Personnel Act, and also is applicable to those positions outlined in section 2.1-116(16) of the Code of Virginia.

VII. AUTHORITY

This policy is issued by the Department of Personnel and Training pursuant to the authority provided in Title 2.1,

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA EMPLOYEES (continued)

Chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia. The Department reserves the right to revise, change, or eliminate this policy as necessary.

VIII. INTERPRETATION

The Director of Personnel and Training is responsible for official interpretation of this policy. Questions regarding the application of this policy should be directed to the Policy Department Section of the Department of Personnel and Training.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, SOUTHEAST REGION

SCHOOL LEAVE POLICY

Federal policy and Office of Civilian Employees and Military chain of command encourages activity heads (Commanding Officers) to encourage volunteer activities.

630-26.01-11-6(7) of the Federal Personnel Manual:

> "Volunteer Activities. Employees may be granted excused absence for short periods of time to participate in volunteer activities that are (a) mission related, (b) officially sponsored or sanctioned by the employing agency, or (c) enhance the professional development and/or skills of employees in their current positions."

Excused absence is defined as an absence from duty, administratively authorized without loss of pay and without charge to leave.

Office of Civilian Personnel Management Instruction 12630.1 -

Leave for Parental and Family Responsibilities

> "The DON (Department of the Navy) endorses a flexible policy of granting annual, sick, leave without pay (LWOP), or any appropriate combination of leave for parental and family responsibilities. This policy statement is part of the DON's philosophy to help strengthen the role of the family."

PRATT & WHITNEY, EAST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

SCHOOL LEAVE POLICY

No formal policy. Management strongly endorses employee involvement in school company established programs:

HEMMINGS MOTOR NEWS, BENNINGTON VERMONT (75 EMPLOYEES)

Employees are allowed paid time off for involvement in their children's schools.

IBM CORPORATION

Wide variety of traditional and innovative programs backed by the highest levels of management:

Personal Leaves of Absence
Flexible Work Leave of Absence Program - full time employees work reduced hours (20-30 per week, minimum of 6 months, maximum of 3 years, with options to continue after 3 years)
Leaves of Absence
Work-at-Home Program
Individualized Work Schedules - start work up to two hours before or after the normal start time at their locations with stop time adjusted accordingly (customer & company requirements)
Meal Break Flexibility - (minimum of 30 minutes to maximum of 2 hours for a meal break - window of time during workday for personal choice activities, based on management approval)
Community Service Career Program - Retirees receive full IBM retirement and a portion of their final salaries for up to two years for working with community service organizations.

NATIONSBANK CORPORATION, RICHMOND, VA

SCHOOL LEAVE POLICY

Associates can devote up to two hours per week, during the work day, to volunteer in schools as tutors, discussion leaders, coaches, mentors, administrative assistants, leader of PTA and other support groups, or in other ways.

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NATIONSBANK CORPORATION, RICHMOND, VA (continued)

SCHOOL RELATED PROGRAMS

Associates can find assistance with questions regarding school achievement, advocacy issues and school choices. Specialists, educated in child development issues, counsel parents on issues including: motivation, discipline, reacting to report cards, encouraging good study habits, college choices, and communicating with teachers.

NCNB CORPORATION, CHARLOTTE, NC

Paid time off for school involvement and other programs actively supported by head of the corporation. A consulting company identified employee needs by revealing that family issues were important to a large number of employees.

In the summer of 1990 the company added a policy to allow employees two hours of paid time off each week for regular involvement in school activities.

LEAVE POLICIES USED FOR SCHOOL SERVICE BY VIRGINIA EMPLOYERS PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AGRICULTURE EXPORTS - UNDER 25 EMPLOYEES

General policy understanding: As much time as needed with work and work responsibilities made up on employee extra time.

DIRECT MAIL ADVERTISING - UNDER 25 EMPLOYEES

3 days per year leave and 2 week vacation. Does not currently allow leave for school service but would consider.

PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION - UNDER 25 EMPLOYEES

8 hours paid per school year for employees with children in addition to annual leave, sick leave and leave without pay policies.

INSURANCE AGENCY - UNDER 25 EMPLOYEES

Two days a year for personal use other than vacation. Support to schools would be as equally important as time provided to professional and civic organizations.

MEDICAL STAFFING TEMPORARY SERVICE - UNDER 25 EMPLOYEES

Employees can use vacations, sick leave, personal leave (8 hours per year) or accrued compensation time. Employees can also be excused without pay for school service.

RETAIL - 26 TO 50 EMPLOYEES

School service leave is allowed within company's paid days off program. Employees can use leave as they see fit.

BANKING - 26 TO 50 EMPLOYEES

Employees can use vacation days, paid personal leave (one and one-half days per year) granted to cover situations where policy does not cover.

LAW FIRM - 26 TO 50 EMPLOYEES

Employees may use 3 Personal days a year; 2 weeks vacation less than 5 years, 3 weeks greater than 5 years. Flextime & Leave Without Pay.

LAW FIRM - 51 TO 100 EMPLOYEES

Personal leave earned at rate of 1.5 days per month after first 6 months up to maximum of 18 days per year accumulated to be used for whatever purpose includes sick leave.

PRIVATELY FUNDED COLLEGE - 101 TO 500 EMPLOYEES

Cooperative arrangements with the local public schools. School service is part of the faculty members responsibilities.

MANUFACTURING COMPANY - 101 TO 500 EMPLOYEES

No provisions exist for paid time off for volunteering unless it is for a civic emergency. Other paid time off is available with pay upon request and approval by supervision, but could involve school functions excluding athletic/social events.

MINING COMPANY - 101 TO 500 EMPLOYEES

An employee may, on written request, for a reasonable cause, obtain a leave of absence without pay for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days on written approval of the Plant Manager.

MANUFACTURING COMPANY - 101 TO 500 EMPLOYEES

Personal leave of absence may be granted when there is compelling and justifiable need for the request and when absence will not result in unusual added expense of disruption to Company operations.

MANUFACTURING - 101 TO 500 EMPLOYEES

Company pays 6 days (sick and personal) per year for (short term) time missed time may be taken in 4 or 8 hour increments. Time not used will be paid as bonus at year end.

PUBLIC SERVICE - COUNTY - 101 TO 500 EMPLOYEES

Paid school leave policy:

1. To meet with a teacher or administrator of any public or private school, grades kindergarten through 12, concerning the employee's children, step-children, or children over whom the employees have custody. Employees also may take leave to attend any school function in which such children are participating or

2. To perform any school-approved volunteer work to assist any public or private elementary, middle or high school. Any teacher or school administrator may provide approval for the volunteer work.

Full-time employees permanent and limited - term may take up to eight hours of School Leave per fiscal year.

Part-time employees permanent and limited - term positions may take up to the number of hours of their monthly sick leave accrual rate.

Subject to the approval of the department manager

School leave which is not taken by June 30 of a fiscal year shall be forfeited.

WHOLESALE TOBACCO CO - 101 TO 500 EMPLOYEES

Paid annual leave available. 5 days accrued after 1 year of service.

UTILITY - 101 TO 500 EMPLOYEES

Annual and vacation leave available.

MANUFACTURING COMPANY - MORE THAN 500 EMPLOYEES

SCHOOL LEAVE POLICY

No formal policy. Any time taken for personal activities, i.e. parental meetings with teacher, etc. would be charged to paid vacation leave. In the case of a couple of hours the supervisor could allow the employee to make the time up.

MANUFACTURING COMPANY - MORE THAN 500 EMPLOYEES (continued)

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Company participates in Junior Achievement and the Adopt a Schools programs. They view approved community service activities as hours worked for the company.

MANUFACTURING COMPANY - MORE THAN 500 EMPLOYEES

Donation of time: With supervisor approval, up to 2 hours per month of company time with prerequisite that the employee actively participate in that organization and dedicate and equivalent amount of personal time to it.

MEDICAL - MORE THAN 500 EMPLOYEES

Employees earn annual paid leave hours each pay period and decide how they want to use it for school functions or volunteer time.

HOSPITAL - MORE THAN 500 EMPLOYEES

Paid Annual Leave based on length of service and time worked for hospital. Used at the employee's discretion, with supervisors approval.

HOSPITAL - MORE THAN 500 EMPLOYEES

Personal, sick, education and leave without pay available.

RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - MORE THAN 500 EMPLOYEES

Paid days off are used for personal days off, vacation, etc., with supervisory approval.

UTILITY - MORE THAN 500 EMPLOYEES

General policy which will grant employees a leave of absence for reasons to be determined to be valid by the company.

Company has a school/business partnership with local county school system. Instructs students on job interviewing techniques, and water safety.

Sources: DOE Survey of Chamber of Commerce Businesses, telephone conversations with Personnel Officers, Business Managers.

APPENDIX G

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MEMORANDUM ENCOURAGING USE OF SCHOOL ACTIVITY LEAVE

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 6-Q
RICHMOND 23216-2060

October 2, 1992

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Department of Education Employees

FROM: Joseph A. Spagnolo, Jr.

SUBJECT: Employee Leave for School Activities

The World Class Education initiative speaks directly to involvement of parents and communities in the reframing of Virginia's education system. As educators we understand the value of parental involvement in the child's education. Further, we know that community support is a vital component of a healthy learning environment.

Last year, Governor Wilder initiated a policy to allow state employees to take eight hours of leave each year to provide assistance in the public schools. This policy is open to parents of school-aged children and non-parents alike.

Each of you has special talents to share with students and educators. I urge you to contact the school of your choice and offer your services as a volunteer, or to use your leave time to increase your involvement in your child's education. Please coordinate your request for school leave through your supervisor.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the improvement of public education in Virginia.

JAS/LPC/saj